

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 21722 030527Z

15

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CAB-02 COME-00 DOTE-00

INR-07 CIEP-01 FAA-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /068 W

----- 109846

O 030356Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1560

INFO AMCONGEN HONG KONG IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC HONOLULU

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY RANGOON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DACCA IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, TH

SUBJ: THAI INTER STRIKES IN LATEST MOVE AGAINST AIR SIAM

REF: BANGKOK 21483

SUMMARY:

ON AUGUST 3 AT 9:00 A.M., THAI INTERNATIONAL AND THE DOMESTIC
THAI AIRWAYS WENT ON STRIKE TO BACK UP A SERIES OF DEMANDS WHICH
INCLUDE THE DISMISSAL OF THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND
THE PERMANENT UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
AND THE REVOCATION OF AIR SIAM'S LICENSE. THE AIRPORT IS
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NOT OFFICIALLY CLOSED BUT IN FACT IS NON-OPERATIONAL. THE

STRIKERS ARE BLOCKING FUEL HANDLING AREAS. NOTHING HAS LANDED AT THE FIELD SINCE ABOUT 8:30 A.M. AND THE PAN AM MORNING FLIGHT OVERFLEW BANGKOK. END SUMMARY.

1. APPROXIMATELY 5,000 EMPLOYEES OF THAI AIRWAYS, WHICH PROVIDES DOMESTIC AIR SERVICE, INTERNATIONAL AIR SERVICE (THAI INTERNATIONAL) AND GROUND HANDLING SERVICE FOR 25 OTHER INTERNATIONAL CARRIERS HAVE VOWED TO CONTINUE THEIR PROTEST UNTIL THE PRIME MINISTER REMOVES THE CURRENT MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS THAWIT KLINPRATHUM AND UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE KAN NAKHAMADI, THE MASTERMIND OF THE MOST RECENT THAI-AIR SIAM MERGER PROPOSAL (REF), RESCINDS THE MERGER ORDER AND RECOGNIZES THAI INTER-AS THAILAND'S ONLY INTERNATIONAL AIR CARRIER AND TERMINATES AIR SIAM'S BUSINESS CERTIFICATION.

2. THE SUDDEN MOVE BY THAI INTER CAUGHT MOST OTHER AIRLINES UNPREPARED. THE SITUATION MAY BECOME CLEARER IN THE COURSE OF THE DAY BUT LOCAL AIRLINE OFFICIALS WITH WHOM WE SPOKE WERE WORRIED THAT THE STRIKE COULD LAST A LONG TIME SINCE THEY BELIEVE THAI INTER IS ADAMANT IN SEEKING THE COMPLETE SHUTDOWN OF AIR SIAM. EMBASSY, HOWEVER, BELIEVES THAT THERE WILL BE INTENSE PRESSURE TO REOPEN AIR TRAFFIC AND THAT STRIKE WILL NOT LAST MORE THAN A DAY OR TWO.

3. COMMENT: ONCE AGAIN ONE OF THE PLAYERS IN THE RTG, THAI INTER-AIR SIAM POKER GAME HAS OVERTURNED THE TABLE. THE PRIME MINISTER NOW MUST GET THE PLAYERS BACK IN THEIR SEATS, THE FIRST STEP BEFORE RESHUFFLING THE DECK TO DECIDE WHETHER TO PROCEED WITH THE CURRENT MERGER PLAN, PROPOSE AN ALTERNATIVE OR FORCE AIR SIAM OUT OF THE GAME.

4. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS AND ARE PREPARING A SUMMARY CABLE GIVING THE BACKGROUND OF THE THIA INTER-AIR SIAM DISPUTE.
WHITEHOUSE

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